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## **Fruitland Magnesium Fire Incident Response**

### **Unified Command**

### **Data Summary Fact Sheet**

### **E 52<sup>nd</sup> Street, Maywood CA**

### **September 29, 2016**

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## **Overview of Fire**

This document is for owners and residents of the homes evacuated following the June 14, 2016 fire at the recycling facility located at 3570 Fruitland Ave. The fire produced fumes, smoke, particulates (such as dust) and debris (large pieces of material) that were released into the air and settled on the ground of nearby properties.

The safety of your home and property (indoors and outdoors) has been assessed by experts to determine whether your home and/or property needed cleaning, and, if your home and property were cleaned, they were also assessed to make sure the cleaning was effective. This document provides information about the assessment and cleaning that took place inside and outside your home.

The assessment and response related to hazardous materials for the Fruitland Magnesium Fire Incident was led by Unified Command (UC), which included the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), and the Los Angeles County Fire Department Health Hazardous Materials Division (HHMD).

## **Air Sampling during and after the Fire**

Air samples were taken during firefighting operations by both the South Coast Air Quality Management District and by EPA. Also, air monitoring was conducted in multiple locations around the facility. The air was monitored for particulates and analyzed for metals to determine whether the air was safe to breathe. During the fire, the residential and industrial area around the facility was evacuated because metals and particulates were detected in the air. After the fire, the air quality improved within a few days so it was safe for residents and businesses to return.

Air monitoring continued every day until July 8, 2016, to evaluate the impact of cleanup operations on air quality and ensure the air was safe for residents to breathe.

## Sampling at Residential Properties

### Before Assessment Work

Prior to entering your property to conduct any assessments or sampling, the resident or property owner signed access agreements after reviewing the process of collecting samples.

**Attachment 1: Outdoor Checklist Signatures** includes the signatures and dates that the access agreement and various outdoor assessments were conducted.

### Outside your home

Outdoor spaces on E 52<sup>nd</sup> Street were evaluated for the presence of ash and debris from the fire. A visual inspection of each parcel was conducted and documented by the Ash Cleanup and Assessment Team (ACAT). Because of the ash and debris found, the following measures were taken to clean the outside of your property:

- Industrial, high-efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter vacuum trucks removed visible ash and debris from roofs, outside walls, concrete areas, patios and other hard surfaces, lawns, plants, and exposed soil.
- Smaller items like outdoor furniture, tools, toys, and bikes were rinsed with clean water in a plastic enclosure to remove any ash and debris. Contaminated water was collected for disposal. Larger pieces of debris were removed by-hand by work crews.
- In order to protect your home from dust and debris during cleaning operations outside, openings—such as windows and doors— were sealed with plastic.

Once the outdoor cleanup was completed, the ACAT conducted another inspection, to ensure that ash and debris had been removed. Once the outdoor area passed the inspection, representatives from the Unified Command reviewed the area and sign off with their approval.

Soil samples were collected in your front and back yards (if there was soil in those areas) to determine whether ash and runoff from the fire had contaminated the soils with metals. Soil samples were analyzed at a laboratory using a standard analysis protocol for 22 different metals: aluminum, antimony, arsenic, barium, beryllium, cadmium, calcium, chromium, cobalt, copper, iron, lead, magnesium, manganese, molybdenum, nickel, potassium, selenium, sodium, thallium, vanadium, and zinc. The concentrations of these metals found in the soil around your home were not a health concern and therefore no soil removal was needed. **See Attachment 2A: Soil Sampling Results** for the results from your home.

## Inside your home

Air and dust samples collected in your home were analyzed at a laboratory using the same standard analysis protocol for the 22 metals mentioned above. However, the only metals found in the ash from the fire that were at levels of concern were: chromium, copper, magnesium, and zinc. Therefore, these four metals were the ones focused during assessment to ensure your home was safe for re-occupancy.

This package includes an explanation of the potential toxic effects of these metals if humans are exposed to unsafe concentrations of these metals. **See Attachment 5: Metals Information** for more details on the metals of concern and their potential health effects. This attachment also includes electronic links to health information on the other metals which were sampled at your residence.

Indoor air was tested by placing sampling pumps inside the home for approximately 4 hours. Fans were used to stir up any dust and ash that could be present – to better simulate living conditions and to increase the likelihood that settled dust would be detected. The material in the air was pumped through filters placed at two different breathing zone heights: one for children and the other for adults. The samples were analyzed, and your results are provided in **Attachment 2B: Indoor Air Sampling Results**.

For homes that had indoor air tests **below** the screening level for metals of concern, additional testing for dust on floor surfaces was done to confirm that contaminants from the fire did not impact the interior of the home. A specialized “micro-vacuum” designed to suction very small particles was used to collect dust onto a filter that was analyzed for the same group of metals. Samples of dust were collected by vacuum in five locations throughout your home. The locations vacuumed were in high traffic areas or near open windows or doors to find any ash. The results of the dust sampling are in **Appendix 2C: Dust Sampling Results**.

A professional cleaning was conducted in homes with air or dust sample results that were **above** the indoor screening level for the metals of concern. Photos were taken prior to cleaning. The indoor cleaning included HEPA vacuum and wiping down of:

- Interior surfaces: walls, countertops; carpets and floors;
- Contents: bedding and clothing (*taken offsite for professional cleaning*); draperies and window coverings; furniture; electronics; kitchen items; and other items;
- Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) systems (where present).

Following indoor cleaning, air and dust samples were collected and tested again to ensure cleaning was effective. Those results are included in **Attachments 2B and 2C**. For those homes that had professional indoor cleaning, **Attachment 4B: ServPro Report** has a summary of the work conducted in your home along with photo documentation.

## Re-occupancy

Unified Command used the sampling results from indoor air and dust samples, and compared the results to the site specific action levels for the four metals of concern—chromium, copper, magnesium and zinc to make the recommendation that your home was safe for occupancy. The action levels utilized for occupancy are very conservative and protective of health for all residents, including children, and were agreed to by county and federal health agencies. For outdoor residential areas, after passing the visual inspection conducted by the Ash Cleanup and Assessment Teams (ACAT), each of the agencies in the UC reviewed the work and provided their approval. **Attachment 4A: Photo Documentation** has before and after photos taken of the outside areas as well as photos of sampling locations inside your home.

Once UC was satisfied that both the indoor and outdoor areas for each residence met the established cleanup requirements, a re-occupancy recommendation was made. The recommendation that a residence was suitable for re-occupancy was made to the Los Angeles County Health Officer. Once the Health Officer determined that a residence was approved for re-occupancy, the residents were notified. See **Attachment 3: Health Officer Re-occupancy Determination**.

## Re-Entry process

Each household was notified once their residence was approved for re-occupancy. A UC representative set up an appointment to provide a walk-through for each residence, explaining what was done on the property. Preliminary results of the indoor air sampling were shown to residents who attended the re-entry appointment. Residents were also requested to sign the Outdoor Checklist of the actions taken at their residence.

## Contact Information

As the cleanup activities continue at the recycling facility located at 3570 Fruitland Avenue, every effort will be made to ensure that dust and ash do not re-enter your neighborhood. Occasionally, you may notice burned metal and other fire debris odors, depending on weather conditions. Please report odors to the South Coast Air Monitoring District at 1-800-CUT-SMOG. If you have any health concerns, please contact LA County Public Health at 213.738.3220. For questions about the facility cleanup, you can speak with EPA's Community Involvement Coordinator, Carlin Hafiz, at 213.244.1814 or hafiz.carlin@epa.gov.